

**ABSTRACT**

Methods and apparatus for providing  
manned, e.g., live customer support to customers, e.g.,  
people using the Internet to purchase goods and/or  
5 services are described. A person viewing a Web Site,  
e.g., a customer, is presented with a button which  
provides the opportunity to talk to a customer service  
representative. Upon activating the button, e.g., by  
clicking on it, the customer's computer or other Internet  
10 browser device sends a signal, e.g., a call request  
message, over the Internet indicating that the customer  
wants to talk with a service representative. The call  
request message includes the customer's telephone number  
and/or IP address. In response to the call request  
15 message, calling equipment is used to establish a  
customer service call between the customer and a customer  
service representative. The equipment can be owned by  
the telephone company thereby avoiding the need for E-  
business companies to make investments in telephone  
20 equipment. In addition, a customer service  
representative can be located either at the E-business  
site or remotely, e.g., at the customer service  
representative's private home or other site, with the  
representative being called by the conference equipment  
25 as required to service a customer. Voice over IP  
conference equipment may be used instead or in  
conjunction with telephone conference equipment where one  
or both of the customer and service representative have  
voice over IP capability.

00596466-061900